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Dear County Superintendents, District Superintendents, and Charter School Principals:

**IMPLEMENTING THE ACCOUNTABILITY COMPONENT OF
NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (NCLB)**

The purpose of this letter is to announce the implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability component in California public schools that becomes effective beginning in July 2003.

On June 10, 2003, the U.S. Department of Education approved California's NCLB Accountability Workbook, which will direct the accountability system in California for the foreseeable future. This workbook combines California's current accountability system, based on the Academic Performance Index (API), with the accountability system required by federal law, which is based on the new definition of adequate yearly progress (AYP). California's Accountability Workbook is available on the Internet at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/pr/nclb/workbook/wb6061.html>.

This letter and pair of enclosed Attachments provides information in two major areas:

- The accountability portion of NCLB, specifically the new definition of AYP and the criteria for meeting AYP ([Attachment A](#)).
- A timeline of upcoming events, with special focus on a videotape to be distributed this month to assist LEAs in training ([Attachment B](#)).

A companion letter with detailed information about how Title I schools will be specifically impacted is being mailed under separate cover.

The New Definition of Adequate Yearly Progress

In January 2003, the State Board of Education adopted a new definition of AYP for California. This action represented a major change in state educational policy in response to the new federal law. All schools (including charter schools, alternative schools, and small schools), districts, and numerically significant subgroups are required to make AYP, regardless of whether the school or district receives federal Title I funding.

California's new definition of AYP includes four components:

1. Percent "proficient or above" on the statewide assessments
2. Participation rate in the statewide assessments
3. Academic Performance Index (API)
4. Graduation rate (for high schools and districts with high schools only)

In order for a school or district to make AYP, it must have:

- A sufficient proportion of its students performing at or above the proficient level on the statewide assessment overall and for each significant subgroup;
- At least a 95% participation rate overall and for each significant subgroup;
- A 2003 Growth API of at least 560 or at least one point of growth, and
- A graduation rate that increases one tenth of one percent each year until the school reaches 100%.

For more detailed information about each of the components of AYP, please see [Attachment A](#).

Timeline for notifying schools and districts of AYP status

A specific timeline of important dates and events related to the release of AYP data, with special focus on a videotape to be distributed this month to assist LEAs in training regarding AYP, is attached (please see [Attachment B](#)).

Contact Information

Questions regarding NCLB requirements for AYP should be addressed to the Evaluation Unit at (916) 319-0875 or <epic@cde.ca.gov>. Questions related to AYP Reports or the API should be addressed to the EPIC Unit at (916) 319-0863 or <epic@cde.ca.gov>. Finally, questions about school or district Program Improvement should be addressed to the Title I Policy and Partnerships Office at (916) 319-0854 or <pi@cde.ca.gov>.

I appreciate your dedication to education and your willingness to work with us to meet the challenges ahead as we enter this new phase of federal accountability.

Sincerely,

JACK O'CONNELL